

# WORKFORCE HORIZONS

## Planning Tomorrow's Workforce Today

Louisiana Department of Civil Service

Volume Three, Issue 33: December 2008

### *In This Issue:*

- ✓ *Questions Job Applicants May Ask You – p.1*
- ✓ *Recruiting and Hiring Metrics – p. 2*
- ✓ *Wasting Time at Work – p. 3*

### **QUESTIONS JOB APPLICANTS MAY ASK YOU**

Today's workforce is increasingly mobile. Employees seldom stay with one employer for more than a few years. Traditionally, employers have dominated the job interview process, but as the balance of power is shifting to employees due to the aging workforce and changing culture, employees are asking Human Resources and Hiring Managers pointed questions during job interviews to determine whether the job and the organization are a good match for them.

Asking yourself these questions will help prepare you to answer them and give you a better understanding of your organization. Here is a sampling adapted from a recent *Workforce Management* article "200 Questions Job Candidates May Ask Your Company."<sup>1</sup>

### **WORKFORCE PLANNING MAXIM OF THE DAY**

*"Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things."* – **Peter Drucker**

#### Questions for Human Resources

Why do you enjoy working for this organization?

Does this job usually lead to other positions in the organization? Which ones?

What is the organization's commitment to equal opportunity and diversity?

Who are the organization's stars and how was their status determined?

What is your policy on attending seminars, workshops and other training opportunities?

How does your organization support and promote personal and professional growth?

How long has this position existed in the organization? Has its scope changed recently?

### Questions for Hiring Managers

What happened to the person who previously held this job?

How would you describe your own management style?

What personal qualities or characteristics do you value the most?

What are the most important traits you look for in a subordinate?

How do you like your subordinates to communicate with you?

How much freedom will I have in determining my objectives and deadlines?

What challenges might I encounter if I take the position?

What areas of the job would you most like to see improvement in relative to the person who previously held the position?

How does upper management perceive this part of the organization?

How do I compare with other applicants you have interviewed?

Describe your ideal candidate. What do my qualifications lack compared to the ideal?

For the complete article on these questions [Click here](#)

### **RECRUITING AND HIRING METRICS**

There has been a lot of discussion in Human Resources circles lately about metrics. How do we measure what we are doing, both in terms of quantity and quality? How do we assess the Human Resources contribution to

the organization? Of particular interest to Human Resources professionals are metrics related to hiring and recruiting.

Dr. Sally Selden who is an associate professor of management at Lynchburg College and a principal investigator for the Government Performance Project<sup>2</sup> offers some insights in her new book Human Capital: Tools and Strategies for the Public Sector.<sup>3</sup> Some suggestions for assessing recruiting and hiring practices taken from her book are outlined below:

*Validated screening instruments:* The percentage of screening instruments used that are professionally validated. Examples of screening instruments are tests, interviews, and reviews of resumes or applications to evaluate experience and education)

*Diversity of recruits:* The percentage of applicants who are members of minorities, female, or from other underrepresented groups.

*Vacancy rate:* The percentage of positions vacant.

*New hire failure rate:* Percentage of new hires terminated during the probationary period.

*Voluntary turnover of new hires:* The percentage of new hires that left voluntarily during the probationary period.

*Quality of new hires by source:* The percentage of new hires by source with the highest performance rating.

*Performance of new hires:* Performance appraisal rating of new hires after six or twelve months on the job.

*Manager satisfaction with quality of new hires and process:* The percentage of managers who are satisfied with the quality of the new hires and the hiring process.

*New hire satisfaction:* The percentage of new hires who are satisfied with the hiring process and the existing working conditions.

## WASTING TIME AT WORK

Every employee spends a certain amount of each workday on activities that are not necessarily work related, whether it is scheduling a hair appointment, making personal phone calls to family members, chatting with co-workers, or surfing the net. But how much time is spent on these activities and why?

Salary.com has released the results of its fourth annual Wasting Time at Work study. 2500 employees were surveyed across all job levels during July and August 2008. Here are the results

### Amount of Time Spent on Non-work-related Activities

14% - 3 or more hours per day  
22% - approximately 2 hours per day  
64% - one hour or less

### Top Non-work-related Activities

48% - Internet Use ( non-work-related)  
33% - Socializing with co-workers  
30% - Conducting personal business  
19% - Personal phone calls  
15% - Long lunches or breaks

### Reasons for Non-work-related Activities

46% - I am unsatisfied at work  
34% - I feel underpaid for the work I do  
24% - I don't have deadlines/incentives

19% - Co-workers/friends/relatives distract me

18% - My work hours are too long

Some interesting differences emerged from the survey. For example, employees with a Bachelor's degree or higher waste slightly more time than employees with less education, Higher up executives and managers waste more time than rank and file contributors, and employees over 50 years of age waste the least amount of time in comparison to younger age groups. Of course all these figures are based on what respondents admit to on the survey.

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*"Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." – Martin Luther King, Jr.*

<sup>1</sup> "200 Questions Job Candidates May Ask Your Company," Workforce Management, (11/24/2008) [www.workforce.com](http://www.workforce.com)

<sup>2</sup>The Government Performance Project (GPP) is a study of public management systems in all fifty states funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts. It is the source of *Governing* magazines grading of the states.

<sup>3</sup>Selden, Sally. 2008. *Human Capital: Tools and Strategies for the Public Sector*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press: 59-60

### CREDITS

*Editor:* Max Reichert, Workforce Planning Assistant Division Administrator (email: [max.reichert@la.gov](mailto:max.reichert@la.gov))

*Issued:* Monthly

*Purpose:* The purpose of the Workforce Horizons is to educate readers about workforce planning issues and best practices, inform them about upcoming Civil Service workshops and training related to workforce planning and to provide practical job aids to assist agencies with workforce planning.

*Comments and submissions:* We welcome questions about workforce planning and suggestions for improvements to the newsletter as well as submissions of articles about what your agency is doing in workforce planning. Questions and comments should be sent to the editor.

*Current and Back Issues* may be viewed by going to the workforce planning portal of the Civil Service web page at [www.civilservice.louisiana.gov](http://www.civilservice.louisiana.gov)